

Claims:

1. A portable holder for use in holding at least one cylinder, said holder comprising:
- 5 frame means forming at least one compartment; and
- a rotatable handle means mounted for rotation on said frame means, said handle means being rotatable between an open position and a closed position;
- wherein, said at least one compartment can contain said at least one cylinder on a one-to-one basis; and
- 10 wherein, in said closed position said handle retains said at least one cylinder within said at least one compartment and in said open position said handle allows said at least one cylinder to be removed from said at least one compartment.
- 15 2. The portable holder of claim 1, wherein said frame means is formed out of a solid structure.
3. The portable holder of claim 1, wherein said frame means is formed out of individual frame members.
- 20 4. The portable holder of claim 2 or 3, wherein said frame means is formed from materials selected from the group consisting of metals, plastics, composites and alloys.

5. The portable holder of claim 4, wherein said handle means comprises:

5 a shaft portion and a grasping portion, said grasping portion located above said frame means.

6. The portable holder of claim 5, wherein said at least one cylinder has a valve assembly and said grasping portion does not protrude above said valve assembly.

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7. The portable holder of claim 1 or 6, wherein a base is located at the bottom of the frame means.

8. The portable holder of claim 7, wherein a cup means is located
15 on said base in each of said at least one compartment, said cup means being shaped to hold said at least one cylinder.

9. The portable holder of claim 7 or 8, wherein said base further comprises a flat portion located at the bottom of said at least one
20 compartment and a recessed portion.

10. The portable holder of claim 9, wherein said shaft extends into said recessed portion of said base and wherein a locking means is located on said shaft in said recessed portion, said locking means
25 adapted to engage a receiving element affixed to a rack means for removably securing said portable holder to said rack means.

11. The portable holder of claim 10, wherein when said handle means is in the closed position, the locking means engages with the receiving element to affix said portable holder to said rack means and when said handle means is in the open position the locking means disengages the receiving element to release said portable holder from said rack means.

12. The portable holder of claim 10 or 11, wherein the rotation of said handle means is restricted to resting only in said open position or only in said closed position by a mechanical means located along said shaft portion.

13. The portable holder of claim 12, wherein said mechanical means is an over-center mechanism.

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14. A portable holder for use in holding two cylinders, said holder comprising:

frame means forming two compartments; and

20 a rotatable handle means located between said compartments for rotation on said frame means, said handle means being rotatable between an open position and a closed position; and

wherein, in said closed position said handle can retain at least one of said cylinders within said compartments and in said open position said handle allows either or both of said two cylinders to be removed from said compartments.

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15. The portable holder of claim 14, wherein said frame means is formed out of a solid structure.

16. The portable holder of claim 14, wherein said frame means is formed out of individual frame members.

17. The portable holder of claim 15 or 16, wherein said frame means is formed from materials selected from the group consisting of metals, plastics, composites and alloys.

18. The portable holder of claim 17, wherein said handle means comprises:

a shaft portion and a grasping portion, said grasping portion located above said frame means.

19. The portable holder of claim 18, wherein each of said two cylinders has a valve assembly and said grasping portion does not protrude above said valve assembly.

20. The portable holder of claim 14 or 19, wherein a base is located at the bottom of the frame means.

21. The portable holder of claim 20, wherein a cup means is located on said base in each of said at least one compartment, said cup means being shaped to hold said at least one cylinder.

22. The portable holder of any of claims 20 or 21, wherein said base further comprising a flat portion located at the bottom of said compartments and a recessed portion located between said compartments.

23. The portable holder of claim 22, wherein said shaft extends into said recessed portion of said base and wherein a locking means is located on said shaft in said recessed portion, said locking means adapted to engage a receiving element affixed to a rack means for
5 removably securing said portable holder to said rack means.

24. The portable holder of claim 23, wherein when said handle means is in the closed position, the locking means engages with the receiving element to affix said portable holder to said rack means
10 and when said handle means is in the open position the locking means disengages the receiving element to release said portable holder from said rack means.

25. The portable holder of any of claims 23 or 24, wherein the
15 rotation of said handle means is restricted to resting only in said open position or only in said closed position by a mechanical means located along said shaft portion.

26. The portable holder of claim 25, wherein said mechanical
20 means is an over-center mechanism.